

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6243

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 0431

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, XA, ILO

SUBJ: AFRICAN LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE

DEPT PASS OTHER OAU POSTS AS APPROPRIATE

1. OAU LABOR MINISTERS MEETING OPENED LIBREVILLE MARCH 24 WITH FOLLOWING COUNTRIES REPRESENTED: ALGERIA, ANGOLA, BURUNDI, CAMEROON, CAR, CHAD, CONGO, DAHOMEY, EGYPT, ETHIOPIA, GAMBIA, GHANA, GUINEA, GUINEA-BISSAU, IVORY COAST, KENYA, LIBERIA, LIBYA, MALI, MAURITANIA, MOROCCO, NIGER, NIGERIA, SENEGAL SIERRA-LEONE, SUDAN, TANZANIA, TUNISIA, UPPER VOLTA, ZAIRE, AND ZAMBIA. EQUATORIAL GUINEA, MADAGASCAR, MAURITIUS, BOTSWANA, LESOTHO AND SWAZILAND DID NOT RESPOND TO INVITATION. ALGERIAN, TOGOLESE AND GHANIAN DELEGATIONS ACCOMPANEIED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE NATIONAL LABOR SYNDICATS.

2. ILO GENEVA REPRESENTED BY DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL BOLIN AND ADDIS ABABA OFFICE BY PIERRE ADOSSAMA (TOGO).

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3. OPENING DAY CEREMONIES HELD AT HEADQUARTERS OF GABON'S PARTI DEMOCRATIQUE GABONAISE (PDG) ATTENDED BY HOST OF GABONESE OFFICIALS AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS. OPENING SPEECH GIVEN BY ABDOULAYE-DIALLO, GHANIAN MINISTER OF LABOR AND PREVIOUS (CONAKRY 1974) CONFERENCE PRESIDENT. AFTER BRIEF WORD OF THANKS TO HOST PRESIDENT BONGO, ABDOULAYE-DIALLO LAUNCHED INTO HIGHLY POLITICAL DIATRIBE AGAINST COLONIALISM, APARTHEID, AND ZIONISM. WILLIAM ETEKI MBOUMOUA, OAU ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY THEN GAVE ARTICULATE DISCOURSE ON THE ROLE OF LABOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

4. IN FINAL MAJOR SPEECH OF THE DAY PRESIDENT BONGO A) HAILED THE PRESENCE OF DELEGATIONS FROM ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE AND GUINEA-BISSAU. B) EXPRESSED HOPE TO SEE "AUTHENTIC" REPRESENTATIVES AT FUTURE CONFERENCES FROM NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE AND "OTHER AFRICAN TERRITORIES STILL UNDER FOREIGN OR RACIST DOMINATION". BUT IN LATTER CONTEXT BONGO ADDED ADMONITION THAT "ONE MUST NOT NEGOTIATE IN FEAR AND ONE MUST ALSO NOT FEAR TO NEGOTIATE". C) NOTED WITH SATISFACTION NUMBER OF AFRICAN NATIONS WHICH SINCE LAST OAU LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN CONAKRY HAD ASSURED ADDITIONAL PROTECTION TO LABORERS (MEDICAL CARE, ACCIDENT PREVENTION, ETC). D) RECOMMENDED ESTABLISHMENT OF COOPERATIVE FUND FOR TRAINING AFRICAN WORKERS. E) NOTED DELEGATES WOULD FACE TASK OF EXAMINING AFRICAN NATIONS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES. SPEAKING FOR GABON, BONGO UNDERLINED FACT THAT "OUR COUNTRIES ARE MASTERS OF THEIR ECONOMIES AND MUST REMAIN SO PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO NATURAL RESOURCES". ACCORDINGLY, MULTINATIONALS MUST RESPECT "OUR ORIENTATIONS AND DECISIONS" AND MUST ADDITIONALLY TAKE PART IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN NATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE TRAINING OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL WORKERS, CREATE BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS AND REINVEST THEIR PROFITS.

5. CONFERENCE CONTINUES THROUGH MARCH 28. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER DETAILS AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.COUNTRYMAN

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